

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 345
AMEMBASSY CAIRO FLASH
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 JERUSALEM 556

EXDIS (HANDLE AS NODIS)

FROM ATHERTON

USDEL NO 30

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, XF, US
SUBJ: TALKING POINTS FOR USE WITH SADAT

REF: STATE 49705

1. FOLLOWING ARE TALKING POINTS I RECOMMEND I BE AUTHORIZED TO
USE WITH SADAT TO EXPLAIN REASONS FOR OUR HAVING HELD UP
DELIVERY OF HIS ORAL MESSAGE TO BEGIN. I HAVE DELIBERATELY
CAST THESE IN RATHER GENERAL TERMS SINCE I DON'T BELIEVE SADAT
WILL BE INTERESTED IN GOING OVER THE TEXT ON A WORD-FOR-WORD
BASIS. HOWEVER, WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO GO OVER THE TEXT IN A
MORE DETAILED MANNER WITH KAMEL (IF THIS IS WHAT SADAT WISHES.)

2. IN ADDITION TO DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS, WHICH I WILL NEED IN
CAIRO BY THE TIME I ARRIVE THERE TOMORROW MORNING, I WILL
APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS AMBASSADORS EILTS AND LEWIS MAY HAVE
AT THAT TIME AS WELL.

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(A) I APPRECIATE SADAT'S AGREEING TO DELAY THE MESSAGE TO
BEGIN UNTIL WE COULD DISCUSS IT FURTHER. HE WILL OF COURSE
DELIVER THE MESSAGE AS SADAT FINALLY WANTS IT DELIVERED,
AFTER WE HAVE HAD THIS TALK. I TOOK THE RATHER UNUSUAL ACTION
OF SUGGESTING THAT THE PRESIDENT'S ORAL MESSAGE TO BEGIN BE
HELD UP BECAUSE I FELT CERTAIN POINTS IN IT NEED TO BE CLARIFIED,
AND ALSO BECAUSE I AM CONCERNED THAT PARTS OF THE MESSAGE

MAY NOT HAVE THE EFFECT ON BEGIN THAT SADAT INTENDED. IN SAYING THIS, HOWEVER, THE PRESIDENT SHOULD KNOW THAT I WAS ABLE TO TO CONVEY BOTH THE THRUST AND FLAVOR OF HIS REMARKS TO ME IN ISMAILIYA IN THE COURSE OF MY REPORT TO HIM ABOUT OUR MEETING. HE IS THEREFORE ALREADY AWARE IN A GENERAL WAY OF THE PRESENT SENSE OF FRUSTRATION THAT PRESIDENT SADAT FEELS OVER THE COURSE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE TAKEN, AND SADAT'S REASONS FOR FEELING THIS WAY.

(B) BECAUSE BEGIN IS LIKELY TO ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO AN ORAL MESSAGE FROM SADAT AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME, IT SEEMS TO US VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE MESSAGE BE CASE IN A MANNER THAT HAS THE EFFECT OF PROMOTING SADAT'S OWN OBJECTIVE OF FACILITATING AND EXPEDITING THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS, RATHER THAN SETTING IT BACK. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE BECAUSE OF THE LIKELIHOOD THAT AT LEAST ELEMENTS OF HIS MESSAGE WILL SOONER OR LATER LEAK TO THE PRESS IN ISRAEL.

(C) WE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE ONE OR TWO GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AT THE OUTSET. IT IS CLEAR FROM MY DISCUSSIONS BOTH IN EGYPT AND IN ISRAEL THAT -- QUITE APART FROM THE ISSUES -- THE TWO SIDES HAVE VERY DIFFERENT CONCEPTS OF THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS. SADAT WANTS FAST INITIAL AGREEMENT ON A SET OF PRINCIPLES THAT IN ISRAEL'S EYES WOULD BE FAR-REACHING IN TERMS OF COMMITTING ISRAEL TO A CERTAIN OUTCOME IN THE NEGOTIATION OF FINAL TERMS OF A SETTLEMENT. THE ISRAELIS BELIEVE SUCH
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PRINCIPLES CAN ONLY EMERGE OUT OF DETAILED NEGOTIATIONS, AND CONSIDERS EGYPTIAN INSISTENCE UPON THEM AT THE OUTSET AS TANTAMOUNT TO DEMANDING "PRE-CONDITIONS." THE DISPARITY IN APPROACH BECOMES A PARTICULARLY ACUTE PROBLEM ON WEST BANK/GAZA ISSUES BECAUSE BOTH SIDES FEEL THAT JORDAN, AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVES WHO HAVE SOME KIND OF MANDATE TO SPEAK FOR THE PALESTINIANS, OUGHT TO JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

(D) SOMEHOW WE MUST FIND A MEETING FROUND BETWEEN THE TWO APPROACHES IF THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE TO GO ANYWHERE. FOR WANT FO ANYTHING BETTER AT THIS STAGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES MUST SERVE THIS PURPOSE. CLEARLY BOTH SIDES ARE NOT ENTIRELY SATISFIED WITH IT IN THE FORM IT IS EMERGING. IT IS NOT THE DOCUMENT OF FAR-REACHING PROPORTIONS THAT SADAT HOPED FOR. FOR THE ISRAELIS, IT GOES TOO FAR--PARTICULARLY ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE -- IN COMMITTING THEM TO PRINCIPLES "IN ADVANCE OF NEGOTIATIONS."

(E) AS SADAT KNOWS, WE INTEND TO PRESS FOR PALESTINIAN LANGUAGE SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME AS USED BY PRESIDENT CARTER IN ASWAN. THE FACT THAT THE DECLARATION WILL INCLUDE LANGUAGE ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION IN ITSELF MAKES THE

DECLARATION A MORE FAR-REACHING AND BROADER BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION THAN RESOLUTION 242, WHICH TREATS PALESTINIANS ONLY AS REFUGEES AND WHICH THE ISRAELIS IN THE PAST HAVE ALWAYS OPPOSED AMENDING OR SUPPLEMENTING. FURTHERMORE, AGREEMENT ON A DECLARATION IS WIDELY VIEWED IN WORLD OPINION AS THE FIRST REAL TEST OF WHETHER SOMETHING CONCRETE CAN RESULT FROM SADAT'S JERUSALEM INITIATIVE. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT BOTH SIDES CONCENTRATE ON REACHING AGREEMENT ON THIS DOCUMENT AS THE IMMEDIATE TARGET AND LAY ISSUES ASIDE THAT ARE NOT IMMEDIATELY GERMANE TO THIS GOAL AND WHICH, IF PURSUED, COULD GREATLY COMPLICATE REACHING IT.

(F) WITH THIS GENERAL CONSIDERATION IN MIND, I WANTED TO MENTION SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THE MESSAGE THAT COULD, IN THIS
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SENSE, LEAD TO MISUNDERSTANDINGS. SOME OF THESE PROBLEMS ARE PRESENTATIONAL IN NATURE WHILE OTHERS INVOLVE THE SUBSTANCE OF WHAT IS BEING SAID.

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EXDIS (HANDLE AS NODIS)

(G) ON THE PRESENTATIONAL SIDE, WE ARE NOT SUGGESTING THAT SADAT DILUTE IN ANY WAY THE THRUST OF HIS MESSAGE, BUT WE BELIEVE HIS MESSAGE MIGHT BE REVIEWED WITH A VIEW TO ELIMINATING LANGUAGE THAT IS NEEDLESSLY CONFRONTATIONAL IN TONE. IN PARTICULAR

WE FEEL THERE IS PHRASEOLOGY IN PARAGRAPHS (6), (8) AND (2) OF THE MESSAGE THAT SEEMS DIRECTED AT BEGIN PERSONALLY. WE KNOW THAT A MISUNDERSTANDING HAS ARISEN BETWEEN SADAT AND BEGIN, BUT WE BELIEVE THE MESSAGE CAN BE COUCHED IN LANGUAGE THAT CONVEYS A SENSE OF MISUNDERSTANDING RATHER THAN THE SUGGESTION THAT BEGIN HAS TRIED TO DECEIVE SADAT OR DELIBERATELY UNDERMINE HIM.

(H) SADAT'S REMARKS ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE (PARA 4) ALSO RAISE SOME QUESTIONS FOR US. THE ISRAELIS ARE ALREADY DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THEIR SECURITY IN THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION AS EXPRESSED IN THE LANGUAGE WE ARE DISCUSSING IN THE DECLARATION. WE INTEND NEVERTHELESS TO PRESS FOR THE ASWAN FORMULATION. IN OUR JUDGEMENT PARAGRAPH 4 AS PRESENTLY WORDED, HOWEVER, WOULD ADD TO THESE CONCERNS UNNECESSARILY, PARTICULARLY IN THE IMPLICATION --
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PERHAPS UNINTENDED -- THAT EGYPT'S CONCERN FOR ISRAEL'S SECURITY EXTENDS ONLY THROUGH AN INTERIM PERIOD. PERHAPS, WHILE THE CURRENT DELICATE PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE TEXT OF THE PALESTINIAN PARAGRAPH IN THE DECLARATION IS UNDERWAY, THE LESS SAID ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN THIS MESSAGE THE BETTER.

(I) WHEN WE ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF A NEGOTIATION ON A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WHICH ISRAELIS SEE AS DEALING WITH KEY SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN TO THEM WHAT SADAT MEANS BY SAYING THAT PRESENT PEACE EFFORTS ARE MOVING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION BY DEALING WITH PROCEDURAL AND WORDING PROBLEMS RATHER THAN GOING DIRECTLY TO SUBSTANCE. THEIR UNDERSTANDING (AND OURS) IS THAT THE PURPOSE OF NEGOTIATIONS ON THE DECLARATION IS PRECISELY TO REACH AGREEMENT ON THE MAIN GUIDELINES OF A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT WHICH SADAT SAYS IS HIS OBJECTIVE (PARA TWO OF ORAL MESSAGE). I ASSUME WHAT SADAT MEANS IS THAT THE DECLARATION SHOULD MAKE CLEAR THAT PEACE CANNOT BE BASED ON ISRAELI CLAIM TO SOVEREIGNTY OVER ANY OF THE TERRITORIES OCCUPIED SINCE 1967 (EXCEPT FOR AGREED MODIFICATIONS ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA) PROVIDED OTHER ARAB LEADERS ARE PREPARED AS HE IS TO OFFER GENUINE PEACE AND TO SIT DOWN AND NEGOTIATE THE DETAILS WITH ISRAEL. IT WOULD BE USEFUL, HOWEVER, TO HAVE CLARIFIED THIS POINT WITH SADAT IN ORDER TO BE IN A POSITION TO EXPLAIN TO THE ISRAELIS WHAT SADAT MEANS IN THIS PORTION OF HIS MESSAGE WHICH ON THE FACE OF IT WOULD SEEM TO CONTAIN INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS.

(J) WITH RESPECT TO SADAT'S REFERENCE TO THE POSSIBILITY OF THE SINAI II AGREEMENT EXPIRING, WE BELIEVE THIS WILL BE TAKEN BY THE ISRAELIS AS AN IMPLIED MILITARY THREAT AND WILL HAVE A
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COUNTERPRODUCTIVE EFFECT ON THEIR WILLINGNESS TO REACH AN ACCOMMODATION ON A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. WE BELIEVE ANY REFERENCE TO THIS IS BEST LEFT OUT OF THE MESSAGE.

(K) IN PARAGRAPH 9, WHERE SADAT LINKS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN AGREEMENT ON SINAI WITH AGREEMENT ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION WE ARE AGAIN CONCERNED AT THE LIKELY REACTION IN ISRAEL AND ITS IMPACT ON NEGOTIATIONS FOR A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. THE IMPLICATION OF THE LANGUAGE IN THIS PARAGRAPH IS THAT FINAL IMPLEMENTATION OF AN EGYPT-ISRAEL AGREEMENT WOULD BE HELD HOSTAGE TO FINAL SETTLEMENT OF THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION, EVEN IF JORDAN AND THE PALESTINIANS PROVED CLEARLY UNREASONABLE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. THIS GOES FURTHER THAN WHAT EGYPT HAS SAID TO US ON THIS SUBJECT AND IT WILL TEND TO STIFFEN ISRAEL'S RESISTENCE TO GIVING ANY GROUND ON LANGUAGE DEALING WITH THE PALESTINIANS IN THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

(L) ON PARAGRAPH 3, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR SADAT TO RECOGNIZE THAT BEGIN'S ASSURANCE TO PRESIDENT CARTER WHICH SADAT CITES WAS MADE IN A CONTEXT THAT RELATED ONLY TO THE SINAI BORDER BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL. BEGIN WOULD FEEL, WITH SOME JUSTIFICATION, THAT HE IS BEING QUOTED OUT OF CONTEXT IN SADAT'S MESSAGE.

(M) AS A FINAL WORD, AND IN SUMMARY, WE WOULD HOPE SADAT WOULD REVIEW HIS MESSAGE WITH THESE PARTICULAR POINTS IN MIND, AND ALSO ASKING WHAT THE ISRAELI REACTION IS LIKELY TO BE AND WHAT EFFECT THIS WILL HAVE ON CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS. WE ALSO NEED TO KNOW WHETHER SADAT WISHES US TO CONVEY ANY REQUESTS CONCERNING THE MANNER IN WHICH THE MESSAGE IS TO BE HELD, RECOGNIZING THAT UNLESS WE DO SO, THE MESSAGE WILL BE CIRCULATED AMONG BEGIN'S CABINET COLLEAGUES AND IS LIKELY QUICKLY TO BECOME PUBLIC PROPERTY. EVEN WITH SUCH A REQUEST, THE
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POSSIBILITY OF THE MESSAGE BEING LEAKED CANNOT BE EXCLUDED.
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